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## POLICING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Secretary of State will announce on 2 September the new five-point plan for the extension of policing in Northern Ireland. The plan has two main objectives: to allow the gradual extension of normal policing services under lawful authority into all areas of Northern Ireland, and to take full advantage of the widely expressed desire of men and women of Northern Ireland to play an individual part in ensuring the security of their own localities.

2. These are the five main points of the plan:

- 1) A series of new local police centres in local communities to act as the focal point for local policing, and as a point of contact with police stations and emergency services.
- 2) The local police centres will be mainly staffed by members of the RUC Reserve working in their own home areas.
- 3) A new-look RUC Reserve, greatly expanded and including many more women, with a new flexibility to enable a much wider range of men and women to make a contribution to the policing of their home areas.
- 4) Other changes affecting the RUC and UDR to offer opportunities of a different type of service to a wider range of men and women.
- 5) Changes in the TIU (Transport Information Unit) civilian searching force.

/3. The following





3. The following details of the plan will also be announced. The establishment of the RUC Reserve will be rapidly expanded, with the number of part-time constables going up from a current strength of 2,000 to an upper limit of 4,000. The number of part-time women constables will jump from the present strength of 250 to an upper limit of 1,500. There will be full-time women constables for the first time with the approval of up to 400 places, and the number of full-time male reservists will also increase from the current strength of about 350 to an upper limit of 1,000.

4. The RUC Reserve will welcome people who want to contribute to the policing of their own localities, and to offer the maximum opportunity for this the criteria for recruitment have been redrawn in certain respects. The minimum age for both men and women will be 18; the maximum age will depend only on the fitness of each individual and, in the case of those already in the Reserve, on their desire to continue to serve. There will be no real problem about the height of applicants if they are suitable in other respects. The educational standard required will concentrate on the needs of the job - to be able to communicate satisfactorily by word of mouth and on paper. There will be no formal tests of the kind which might deter an older applicant. And the pay and conditions of service for the new Reservists will be the same as for the existing members of the RUC Reserve. The applications will be essentially simple: a short application form, and an interview with an RUC Inspector.

/5. The scheme



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5. The scheme will also enable people to support the local police centre. Their general ~~involvement~~ <sup>support</sup> and vigilance in their home areas will be of great assistance, and they will have an important contribution to make to the security of their own community.

6. The major innovation of the plan is the proposal for a series of local police centres. These link centres will extend policing to areas which at present are remote from main police stations or are not covered by normal police services. They will be set up in rented premises, caravans or special vehicles, and so the delays of building a conventional purpose-built police station will be avoided. They will serve areas such as housing estates and villages, and other centres of population, and the expanded local reserves will be concentrated primarily on the new centres. Each centre will be equipped with communication facilities for easy contact with existing main police stations, with fire, hospital and ambulance services, and with RUC mobile and foot patrols. Centres will make particular use of women reservists, whose potential for a wide range of policing duties will be fully explored. Keeping of records will be as limited as possible, and the hours of opening and duty will be flexible in accordance with local requirements. The centres will also act as clearing houses for information and complaints and will provide advice. Reservists will be given training in basic duties particularly related to their home areas, and this will be given locally by RUC training staff.

/7. The flexibility

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7. The flexibility of the plan is emphasised by the fact that local police centres will be set up largely on the initiative of local people: a local police centre will be created where an established need exists and the local community expresses a desire to have one as the focus for a local contribution to local policing.

8. The expanded RUC Reserve will also have a new look. Reservists will wear distinctive shoulder flashes on their uniforms to identify them with their area. The local Reservists will not necessarily be armed, although they may have the opportunity of accepting a weapon for personal protection while on duty and of being trained in weaponry. There will be no badges of rank at the outset, as it is not intended to introduce a rank structure into the expanded Reserve. Reserve constables with special abilities can be appointed for administrative and co-ordinating duties.

9. Some changes will also be announced relating to the RUC and UDR, again in order to provide the widest possible range of opportunities to people in the community who wish to contribute to these existing services rather than to the expanded Reserve. The recruiting target for the RUC will be raised to 6,500, and more posts will be offered to women, whose establishment will be more than doubled to 750. The existing formal education entry standards will be maintained, as developments in UK police forces generally indicate that the police forces of the future will be increasingly highly trained and educated. RUC regular constables will give assistance at some of the local police centres, and a senior officer and staff will be appointed to control the operation of link centres



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in the Province. An important result of the expansion of the Reserve will be the opportunity for fully-trained regular constables to be redeployed to tasks for which manpower has been short in recent years.

10. Recruitment to the UDR too will be stepped up, and it will continue to perform the same essential duties. As its manpower increases sufficiently, there will be increased opportunity for soldiers to be deployed regularly in their own home areas. Men and women will in future be able to serve until 60, and the ages for recruitment will be expanded in line with this change.

11. Another important feature of the plan is a change of name and expansion for the Transport Information Unit, the Government employed civilian search force on duty at ports and in the Belfast Segment. ~~Its members~~ <sup>They</sup> will be known in future as Search Wardens, and will remain in the same role, working under the protection of the security forces. A further hundred searchers (including 40 women) will be recruited for the Belfast Segment, and there are plans to recruit Search Wardens to operate in the Londonderry Segment.

12. Commenting on the five-point plan, the Secretary of State will say: "These are positive steps to associate the community more closely with the Police service, which is so vital to the welfare and protection of our community. The scheme should be acceptable to both the majority and the minority, and so gradually to relieve the Army of duties which it is not designed to undertake. The new link centres for local policing can be made available where there is a real need, and in response to the local desires which have been

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conveyed to me repeatedly in the past few months for ordinary men and women to make a positive contribution to the security and good order of their own home areas.

The opportunities for service with the expanded RUC Reserve and with the other bodies are now so wide and so various that every man and woman who wants to serve will be able to find a place - full time, part time, with the Army in the UDR; with the police and with the police reserves; with a civilian organisation as Search Wardens - provided that he achieves the necessary minimum standard of competence which ensures that he will be acceptable to the average person with whom he will come into contact.

An effective Police force lives within the community which it serves. It draws its strength, support and prestige from that community. This is a constructive approach to the prolonged and difficult problems of acceptable policing in Northern Ireland, and I believe that all parties and all sections of the community will give the five-point plan their support without any reservations."

BRITISH EMBASSY

DUBLIN

30 August 1974

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